

FINAL REPORT

City Council Strategic Planning Workshop June 7-8, 2008



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the course of two days at the Dallas / Plano Marriott Legacy Town Center, the Mayor, five members of the City Council, the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, and Executive Assistant, and the City Secretary of the City of Forney, Texas completed the city's annual strategic planning workshop. The planning session, facilitated by a consultant from the Azimuth Group, ("AGI") Inc., resulted in the articulation of several key elements of a long range strategic framework for the city. These included:

- A consensus statement of the future vision for the City of Forney
- A City Council developed mission statement to guide the operations of city government
- A set of core values to establish the ethical constructs within which city business should be conducted
- Identification of several important differentiating characteristics of the City of Forney that can be leveraged to achieve strategic success
- Seven separate strategic objectives around which key policy decisions can be evaluated and important organizational and operational activities can be managed.

Purpose of the Strategic Planning Workshop

The strategic planning workshop focused primarily on **What** the City of Forney needs to accomplish to achieve success, rather than the day-to-day **How**s of municipal operations and service delivery. Good strategic planning addresses the issues that challenge you today and, more importantly, those that will challenge you tomorrow. Accordingly, the strategic planning workshop was an exercise in collective foresight, as the participants worked together to clarify what success looks like for the City of Forney in light of expected future conditions and where the leadership wants to take the community and the organization.

Vision / Mission / Values

Strategic plans often begin with a clear statement of the vision, mission and values of the organization. These brief statements represent a set of guiding or governing principles for both the City Council and staff. The Forney strategic planning workshop began with a series of small group exercises to confirm, clarify or establish these governing principles.

Community Vision

An organization’s vision is aspirational in nature. It defines what the organization wants to be or to achieve. It is an idealized description of the desired future state of the community. Based on a brief visioning exercise conducted at the workshop, a “picture” of a vision for Forney was developed. Based on the subsequent discussion as the basis, the workshop facilitator drafted the following condensed vision statement:

FORNEY VISION

Forney is a beautiful hometown community of opportunity, mobility, and vibrancy.

Organizational Mission Statement

A mission statement describes the organization’s purpose. It defines the “business” of the organization and its relationship to its customers. The City’s mission statement, which had been previously developed in an earlier workshop, is shown below:

MISSION STATEMENT

Working together to build a sense of community in a safe environment, while attracting quality growth in a family-oriented atmosphere.

Values

Values are the fundamental principles that guide how members of the organization conduct themselves in pursuit of the mission and vision of the organization. Together, the values provide an ethical framework for decision-making and action. A small group of workshop participants brainstormed a series of value statements which were then shared and discussed with the larger group to achieve a consensus on the values and the meaning of those values. Those agreed values are shown below:

FORNEY VALUES

- **TEAMWORK** – We put community service first and work together in a positive, upbeat, encouraging and trustworthy manner.
- **INTEGRITY** – Our behavior is characterized by trust, ethical conduct and truthfulness.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY** – We deliver public services with efficiency and a focus on effective implementation of policy decisions.
- **VISION** – We think creatively and “out of the box” and are open to new ideas.
- **PROFESSIONALISM** – We are approachable and always maintain a professional demeanor and appearance. In hiring we seek to attract the best and continuously improve, train, and develop our people.

Differentiators

Forney exists within a competitive marketplace. To achieve its vision it must successfully compete with other communities in the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area to attract investment in the form of home owners, commercial developers, employers, shoppers and visitors. Just as a commercial enterprise needs to understand how it is differentiated from other companies providing the same or similar goods or services, so, too, must a municipal government understand its unique characteristics and then use them to its competitive advantage.

Workshop participants developed a significant listing of community differentiators, both those that exist today and those that they wish to create. A paraphrased listing of those differentiating characteristics for Forney, developed by the workshop facilitator, includes the following;

COMPETITIVE DIFFERENTIATORS

- Friendly, welcoming city
- Unique history and heritage
- Historical downtown
- Many neighborhoods, one city
- High household incomes
- Convenient highway and rail access
- “Celebratory City” of community activities and festivals
- Willingness to grow and improve
- Supportive citizenry
- Family and youth orientation

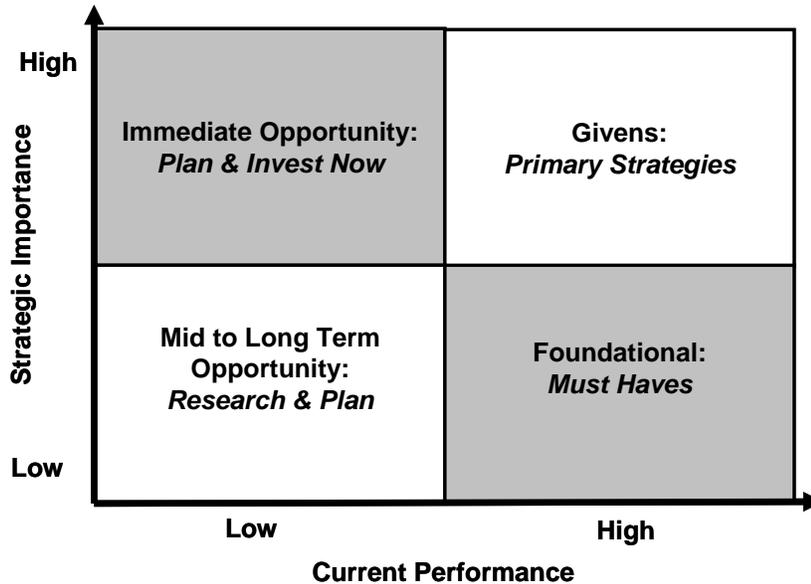
Strategic Objectives

To identify these areas of strategic focus, workshop participants were challenged to mentally go forward in time to imagine great success. They visualized a situation where the city had achieved its vision through successful accomplishment of its mission while operating within its value framework. Then they were asked, “Looking back on today from a position of great success, what, specifically, did the city do to achieve that success.” Each participating member listed the action steps that, if taken today, would lead the city to that future position. Many individual ideas were generated. Then, working together, these ideas were grouped together according to their common themes. From this exercise, a total of seven strategic objectives emerged as the most important ones for Forney’s future. These strategic focus areas are considered coequal – the city must have all seven to achieve strategic success.

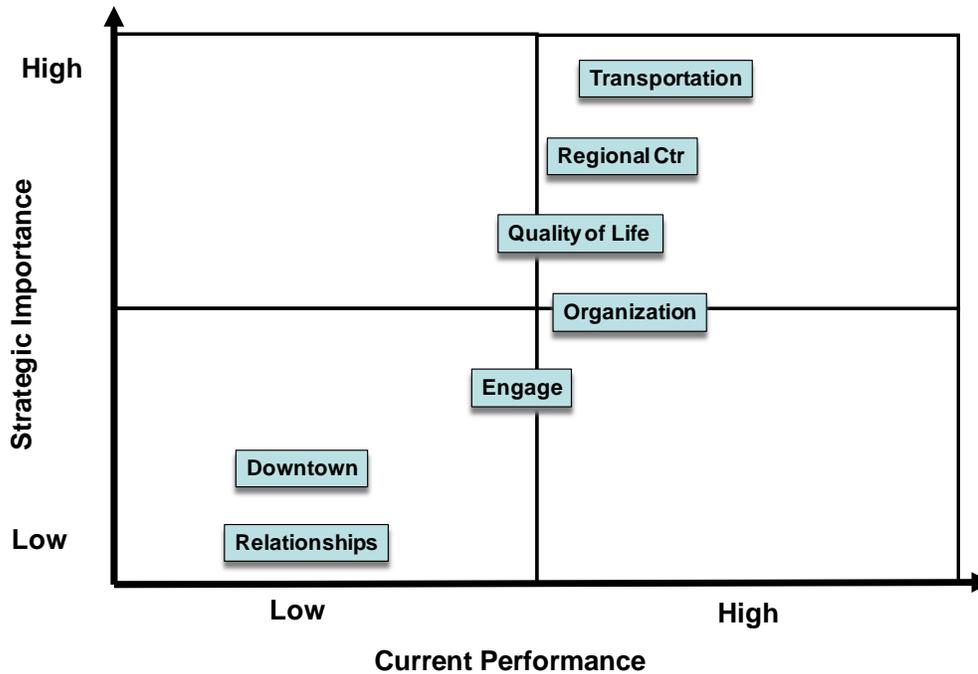
These seven strategic objectives are shown below:

- FORNEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**
- Implement transportation improvements
 - Develop the municipal organization
 - Foster strategic relationships
 - Revitalize and expand downtown
 - Become a regional center
 - Enhance the quality of life
 - Actively engage the community

After identifying and agreeing on these strategic objectives, the participants next engaged in a process of ranking and evaluating them using anonymous voting technology. Each of the seven strategic objectives was evaluated on two separate dimensions: **Strategic Importance** and **Current Performance** and then these ratings were plotted on and evaluated on a 2x2 matrix, as shown below:



The consensus scatter plot of the seven Forney strategic objectives is shown below:



Based on the interpretation matrix, the following assignments of each of the seven strategies were made:

Givens - Primary Strategies

- Implement transportation improvements
- Become a regional center
- Enhance the quality of life

Foundational - Must Haves

- Develop the municipal organization

Immediate Opportunity - Plan and Invest Now

- None identified

Mid to Long Term Opportunity - Research and Plan

- Engage the community
- Revitalize and expand downtown
- Foster strategic relationships

Immediate Action Steps

Having identified seven key strategic objectives or focus areas, the City Council then worked to identify specific projects or initiatives for each major strategy. Action items were developed and prioritized. Below are listed the Council's top priorities for the coming fiscal year in each of the seven strategic focus areas. The full report includes a more detailed list of programs and initiatives for each.

Implement Transportation Improvements

- Open the Main Street extension
- Repair existing streets and roads
- Create a ride share website and promotional billboards

Become a Regional Center

- Sign an incentive package with the Endeavor development group
- Identify and target 10 prime companies we want to locate in Forney
- Assess transportation, location, linkage and synergies for regional development

Enhance Quality of Life

- Create a Public Improvement District for Fox Hollow
- Explore community college partnerships
- Look at attracting retirement housing / assisted living development

Develop the Municipal Organization

- Hire an Events Planner / Public Information Officer
- Establish an Information Technology Department and hire an IT person
- Hire a City Attorney
- Create a Parks Department and do all programming for city parks
- Create a Forney Sports Authority

Engage the Community

- Improve and expand the City's website

- Conduct a City Council meeting at Forney High School
- Develop a quarterly 75126 zip code newsletter
- Develop and hold a Board Appreciation dinner

Revitalize and Expand Downtown

- Determine what can be done now to make the old fire station look better
- Light downtown buildings

Foster Strategic Relationships

- Explore the feasibility of hiring a lobbyist
- Go to Austin as a “City” not as a “County”
- Seek a Forney appointment to the Regional Transportation Council

Strategy Articulation Map

A strategy articulation map is simply a graphical depiction of an organizations strategy in terms of its mission, vision, values, market differentiators and strategic focus. It can and should be expanded to include the specific action steps required for achievement of strategic success and can be cascaded through the organization to facilitate the development of departmental and divisional work programs that “roll up” to the individual strategies depicted in the map. The strategy articulation map resulting from Forney’s strategic planning workshop is shown on the following page.

Strategy Articulation Map

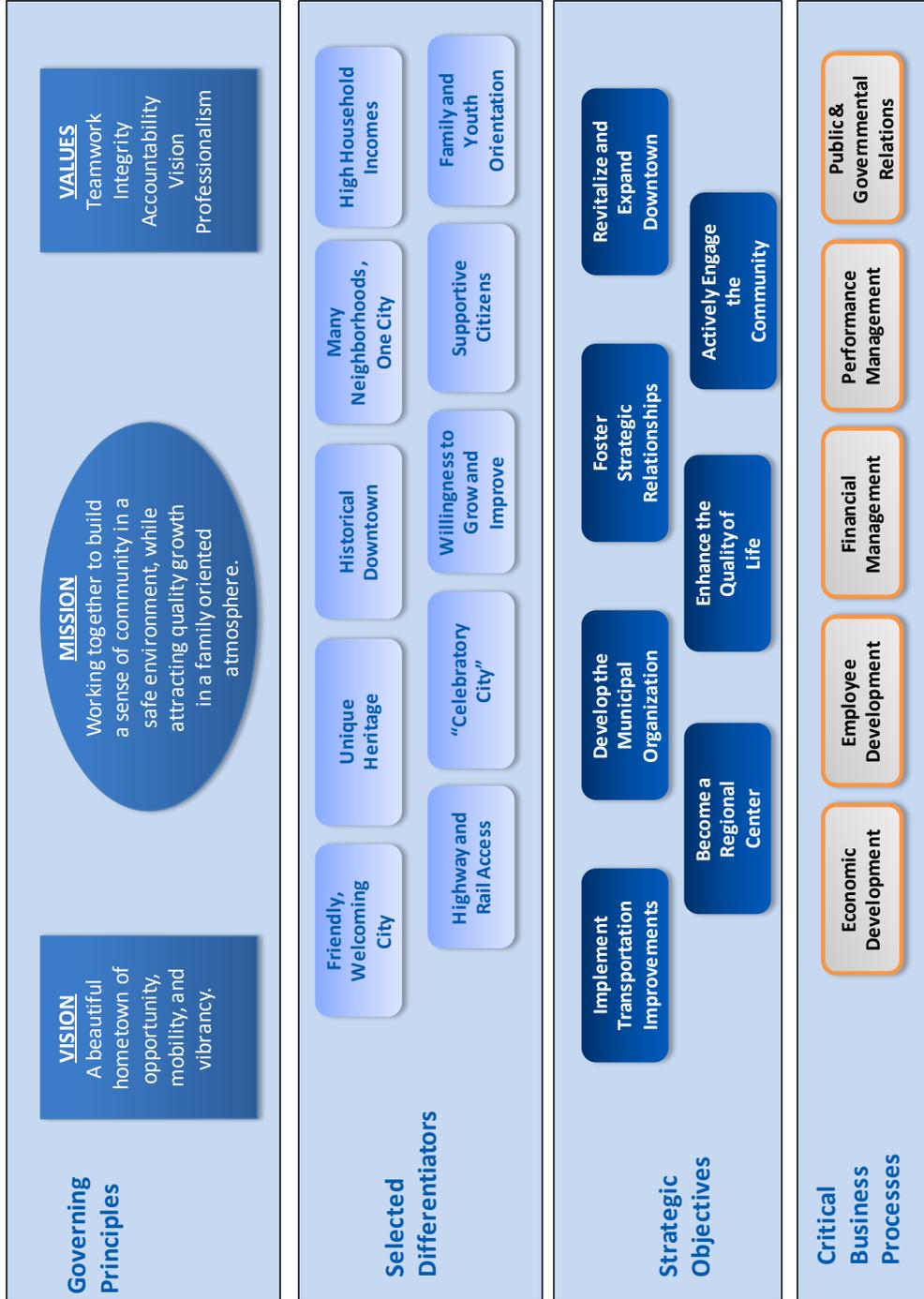


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INTRODUCTION

Over the course of two days at the Dallas / Plano Marriott Legacy Town Center, the Mayor, five members of the City Council, the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, and Executive Assistant, and the City Secretary of the City of Forney, Texas completed the city's annual strategic planning workshop. The planning session, facilitated by a consultant from the Azimuth Group, Inc., resulted in the articulation of several key elements of a long range strategic framework for the city. These included:

- A consensus statement of the future vision for the City of Forney
- A City Council developed mission statement to guide the operations of city government
- A set of core values to establish the ethical constructs within which city business should be conducted
- Identification of several important differentiating characteristics of the City of Forney that can be leveraged to achieve strategic success
- Eight separate strategic objectives around which key policy decisions can be evaluated and important organizational and operational activities can be managed.

During the workshop, City Council members and top city staff members were able to openly discuss the city's strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats and to then forge agreement on the highest order priorities on which to focus in the future. These strategic priorities, in turn, will help to establish the foundation for more specific action steps, resource plans (budgets) and performance measures. The strategic planning workshop, therefore, produced a unifying frame of reference to guide daily policy and operating decisions, organizational structures and governance.

This report details the results of the strategic planning workshop and includes recommendations for continuation of the momentum already established.

PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

The City of Forney's decision to begin a strategic planning effort was prompted by the convergence of a number of interrelated factors. However, most significantly, the appointment of a new City Manager provided the Mayor, City Council and City Manager a "window of op-

portunity” to establish, together, a clear vision of the city’s desired future and to begin a continuous process of planning, leading and executing to create that desired future.

Strategic planning is a product of strategic thinking, which should occur not only at periodic planning sessions such as the one just completed, but on a continuous basis. Strategic thinking and planning should occur at the highest levels of the organization, but should not stop there. It must cascade to lower levels of the organization and should directly drive decision making. Strategic planning involves the gathering, sorting and prioritizing of the best thinking of Forney’s policy leaders and executive managers, focused on the core purposes of the organization and the most important attributes of success.

The strategic planning workshop focused primarily on **What** the City of Forney needs to focus on to achieve its overall vision for the future rather than the day to day **How**s of municipal operations and service delivery. Good strategic planning addresses the issues that challenge you today and, more importantly, those that will challenge you tomorrow. Accordingly, the strategic planning workshop was an exercise in collective foresight, as the participants worked together to clarify what success looks like for the City of Forney in light of expected future conditions and where the leadership wants to take the community and the organization.

PLANNING ISSUES & THEMES

Prior to the conduct of the strategic planning workshop, the planning facilitator conducted a series of individual interviews with each member of the City Council, the City Manager, Assistant City Manager and selected Department Directors . The purpose of these interviews was to provide the facilitator with an understanding of Forney as a community and an appreciation for the operational environment and issues facing the municipal government organization. From these interviews, a set of “themes” emerged. These themes, from both the staff and City Council perspectives, then helped to establish a common basis of understanding moving into the workshop itself.

Council issues and themes tended to divide between “external” or community based concerns, most of which are related to growth and its implications, and “internal” concerns related to the organization and its operation. Not unexpectedly, Council members tend to be more focused on the community aspects of their job and less so on the organization and management of the municipal government.

On the other hand, City staff leaders were more focused, in terms of the issues they need addressed, on the internal matters of priorities, staffing, other resource requirements, and the like. They welcome the strategic planning effort. There is a common feel that Forney,

having experienced rapid growth, can benefit from a process in which the City Council clarifies its priorities and requirements more specifically, so that the staff can do a better job of organizing and budgeting work efforts to responsively meet those expectations.

The table below compares and contrasts elected and appointed official perspectives on the issues and concerns facing the City of Forney today, from both community and organizational standpoints.

Elected Official Perspectives	Appointed Official Perspectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council members generally agree that actively addressing the challenges of growth is the single, overriding concern that they face as community leaders. While there is some division on the most appropriate response to growth pressure, there is unanimity on the idea that growth is ultimately inevitable and that the City must devise strategies to either benefit from that growth, ameliorate its negative consequences, or both. • Among the most pressing needs generated by the City’s growth and development are significant capital investment / infrastructure related requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transportation improvement needs, especially new / expanded roadways to help alleviate growing traffic congestion ○ Parks and recreation system improvements to meet community demand for public open spaces, athletic facilities, and hike / bike trails ○ Municipal facilities requirements such as public safety facilities and a future City Hall. • With the passage of a large bond issue, with strong majority support of the citizens, many of these capital improvement projects are now funded and in various stages of the planning, design, and construction process. Having been so successful at securing public support, many members of the Council are now concerned that the City implement these projects aggressively so that visible results are seen sooner. • A method to address the need for higher-end residential development is important to some. One option favored by some is the potential to allow the usage of PID’s and/or MUDs within the corporate limits of Forney. • The recently announced Endeavor / Meadow Ridge project is seen by the majority of Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departments have historically done “their own thing” in terms of strategic, operational and capital planning. The City Council strategic planning effort offers an opportunity to develop an overall, consistent framework for the city as a whole. • As growth continues, the need to attract, employ, train and retain high quality staff – at all levels of the organization – is crucial. The City of Forney operates in a competitive market and a focus on maintenance of a strong competitive position is an ongoing requirement for organizational success. • The City needs to do a better job of establishing documented and standardized business processes, procedures, and policies to drive consistency and reliability in service delivery, as well as cost efficiency. • While the city is making significant current investments in technology, some feel that the City is still behind in this area and that the effective and creative application of information technology will be increasingly important. • While the available technology is adequate, some members of the staff feel that there are additional opportunities to better leverage technology investments to improve services, contain costs and enhance citizen access. • Fiscal discipline is always important. When the documented needs of the organization outstrip the availability of resources, hard choices have to be made and will require the Council and staff to work closely together to understand the tradeoffs involved. • It is important in the staff’s mind that they not risk erosion of their current service levels

Elected Official Perspectives	Appointed Official Perspectives
<p>Members as an important success in terms of the development community's willingness to invest in Forney. However, there are also significant concerns about the costs and community impacts of such a large commercial development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council members have a strong desire to attempt to preserve the historical, "small town / home town" feel of Forney. This is an aspect of community life that they fear may have been lost, or is in the process of slipping away, in the face of continued growth. Council members do not want to see Forney become just another undifferentiated bedroom community offering reasonably priced housing to a commuting public. However, definition of how this home town feeling is to be preserved or recaptured is difficult. Suggestions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improving and expanding on existing or potential municipal festivals and celebrations such as the Independence Day fireworks display, Home Town Christmas in the Park, Homecoming, Chili Cookoff, etc. ○ Revitalization of the historical downtown area. ○ Improving the appearance of the community through the adoption and enforcement of reasonable property maintenance codes. • The needs of the older, established parts of the community cannot be left unaddressed or go ignored in the interest of the newer projects and developments. • The impact of current economic conditions on Forney citizens is a growing concern. • The price of fuel and food, and the expected, resultant increase in other commodities, is squeezing Forney residents, many of whom are commuters. This drives a number of concerns, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The need for economic development, with a focus on high value job creation ○ The need for economic development to provide nearby commercial, retail, and entertainment venues ○ The potential requirement to address transportation issues through such techniques as park / ride facilities, promotion of carpooling, and potential extension of re- 	<p>and capabilities by taking on too much more within current resources. "We have to do what we are doing well before taking on any more."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the significant investment in new municipal infrastructure, operation and maintenance costs can be expected to increase dramatically. • Many municipal ordinances, standards, policies, etc. need to be either a) created or, b) updated to be fully effective tools for management.

Elected Official Perspectives	Appointed Official Perspectives
gional transit.	

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION OBJECTIVES

The main goal of the City Council’s strategic planning retreat was on the **What** rather than the **How** of municipal operations. Strategic planning is a product of strategic thinking, which should occur not only at periodic planning sessions, but on a continuous basis. It involves the gathering, sorting and prioritizing of the best thinking of Forney’s policy leaders and executive managers, focused on the core purposes of the organization and the most important attributes of success.

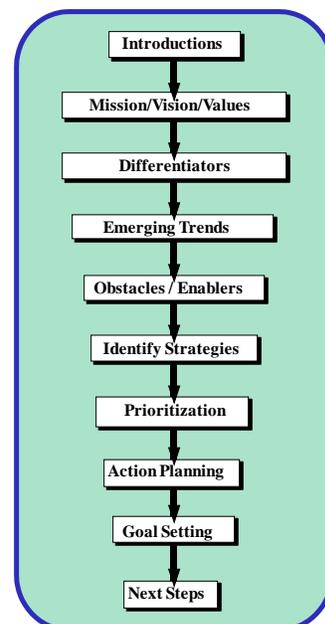
Strategic planning should address the issues that challenge you today and, more importantly, those that will challenge you tomorrow. The strategic planning workshop, therefore, was an exercise in foresight. Its purpose was to clarify what success looks like for the City of Forney in light of the conditions expected in the future and where the Council wants to lead the organization and the community.

With this in mind, an important purpose of the planning retreat was to have open dialog about the city’s strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and to then forge agreement on the highest order priorities. These priorities, in turn, can be used to establish the foundation for defining more specific action steps, resource plans (budgets), and performance measures going forward. The results of the strategic planning workshop also produced a unifying frame of reference to guide daily policy and operating decisions, organizational structures and governance.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The actual process applied to the development of the Forney Strategic Plan is depicted in the graphic to the right. Specifically, over a two-day period, the City Council and staff worked through a series of small group exercises, brainstorming sessions and other techniques to:

- Confirmed a mission statement for the City of Forney, along with supporting statements of a long range vision and a value framework



- Define important differentiators of Forney, with respect to other communities with which it competes, as a basis for future planning
- Identify important indicators of success in terms of kinds of measures or trends that will demonstrate that the city is achieving its strategic goals
- Think about the obstacles to success that might be encountered and to identify enablers or resources available to the city to overcome those obstacles
- Define specific strategies to focus future decision making and resource allocation
- Assess and prioritize those strategies in terms of both their importance to the city's future and the extent to which the city is performing in these strategic objectives today
- Identify specific immediate, mid-term and long term goals for the implementation of high priority strategies.

Each aspect of this process is described in more detail in the following sections of the report.

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

COMMUNITY VISION

An organization’s vision is aspirational in nature. It defines what the organization wants to be or to achieve. It is an idealized description of the desired future state of the community. Based on a brief visioning exercise conducted at the workshop, a “picture” of a vision for Forney was developed. Based on the subsequent discussion s the basis, the workshop facilitator drafted the following condensed vision statement:

FORNEY VISION

Forney is a beautiful hometown community of opportunity, mobility, and vibrancy.

ORGANIZATIONAL MISSION STATEMENT

A mission statement describes the organization’s purpose. It defines the “business” of the organization and its relationship to its customers. The City’s mission statement, which had been previously developed in an earlier workshop, is shown below:

MISSION STATEMENT

Working together to build a sense of community in a safe environment, while attracting quality growth in a family-oriented atmosphere.

VALUES

Values are the fundamental principles that guide how members of the organization conduct themselves in pursuit of the mission and vision of the organization. Together, the values provide an ethical framework for decision-making and action. A small group of workshop participants brainstormed a series of value statements which were then shared and discussed with the larger group to achieve a consensus on the values and the meaning of those values. Those agreed values are shown below:

FORNEY VALUES

- **TEAMWORK** – We put community service first and work together in a positive, upbeat, encouraging and trustworthy manner.
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DIFFERENTIATORS AND TRENDS

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COMPETITIVE DIFFERENTIATORS

- Friendly, welcoming city
- Unique history and heritage
- Historical downtown
- Many neighborhoods, one city
- High household incomes
- Convenient highway and rail access
- “Celebratory City” of community activities and festivals
- Willingness to grow and improve
- Supportive citizenry
- Family and youth orientation

ENVIRONMENT, OBSTACLES & ENABLERS

At this point in the planning process, the workshop participants have, together, developed and reached agreement on four critical elements of the strategic plan:

- A statement of vision
- A mission statement
- A set of values
- A listing of Forney’s competitive advantages

Having decided, at the highest level, where it is they want the city to go, the participants next worked to assess their operating environment. Then, having identified emerging trends and environmental forces, the work shifted to identifying those things that might impede their progress towards realization of the vision and accomplishment of the mission (obstacles) and, conversely, those assets or strengths available to overcome those impediments (enablers).

EMERGING TRENDS / ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

To better understand the operational context within which the City of Forney must execute its strategic plan, the workshop participants were asked to develop a list of “emerging trends.” This environmental scan of forces, generally outside of the control of the City of Forney, provides information suggestive of both opportunities and difficulties that may lie ahead. The identified emerging trends are shown in the box at right:

EMERGING TRENDS / ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

- MUD’s in the ETJ
- Land-locked except to NE
- TxDOT owns all highways
- No strong political ties in Austin
- Increasing values
- Perception of distance
- “Empty” developments
- Fuel cost increases
- Desire to live close to work
- Likely interest rate hikes
- Absence of mass transit
- Terrell’s T.I.F.
- Endeavor Project
- Fundamental economic shift [coming downturn]
- Political stability
- Lack of downtown strategy

OBSTACLES & ENABLERS

Obstacles must be overcome to achieve strategic success. Enablers are the assets and strengths that can be applied to drive the organization forward. Working in small groups, followed by group discussion, the workshop participants agreed on the following lists of obstacles and enablers:

OBSTACLES	ENABLERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council vs. Staff [potential] • Financial constraints • Lack of direction [policies] • Segregation of Efforts, i.e.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School ○ Chamber ○ EDC ○ City • Inability to change (staff) • Disconnection • Communication • Developable Space • Council Stability • Staff Stability • Slow to seize opportunity • Road Infrastructure • TxDOT • Lack of employment base • Lack of mass transit • Community image/perceptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax Abatements • EDC • Endeavor Project • PID's • Flexibility/Open to professional advice • Median H/H Income • Church participation in community • Staff Quality • Being visionary • Community support • Financial resources • Education - schools

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

How will the policy leaders, staff and citizens of Forney know that the city is making progress towards its vision and succeeding in its mission? The workshop participants developed a set of performance indicators that would provide evidence of strategic success..

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

- Attractions – i.e., Ball Park, Shopping are open
- Non-Resident Revenues are up (sales tax)
- Reliance on property tax as % of funding is down
- Stable to lower property tax rate (O&M)
- Traffic congestion relieved
- Same City Council / High citizen satisfaction
- Event attendance is up

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

After systematically considering multiple facets of the City of Forney's current and desired market position, identifying strengths and weaknesses and more clearly defining the city's purpose and values, the workshop participants next turned their attention to the specific areas of policy leadership and management focus that are likely to have the greatest impact on the city's long term success.

To identify these areas of strategic focus, workshop participants were challenged to mentally go forward in time to imagine great success. They visualized a situation where the city had achieved its vision through successful accomplishment of its mission while operating within its value framework. Then they were asked, "Looking back on today from a position of great success, what, specifically, did the city do to achieve that success." Each participating member listed the action steps that, if taken today, would lead the city to that future position. Many individual ideas were generated. Then, working together, these ideas were grouped together according to their common themes. From this exercise, a total of seven strategic objectives emerged as the most important ones for Forney's future. These focus areas are considered coequal – the city must have all seven to achieve strategic success. These seven strategic objectives are shown below:

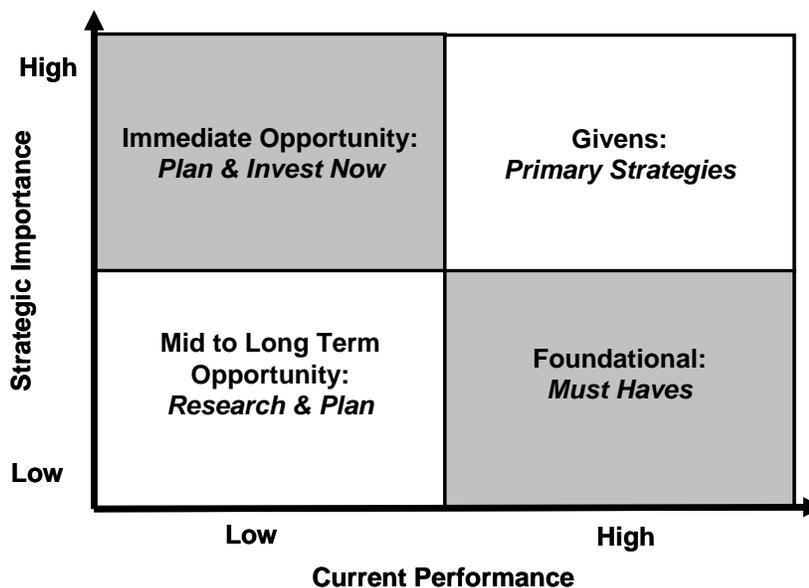
FORNEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Implement transportation improvements
- Develop the municipal organization
- Foster strategic relationships
- Revitalize and expand downtown
- Become a regional center
- Enhance the quality of life
- Actively engage the community

After identifying and agreeing on these strategic objectives, the participants next engaged in a process of ranking and evaluating them using anonymous voting technology. Each of the

seven strategic objectives was evaluated on two separate dimensions: **Strategic Importance** and **Current Performance**.

The first evaluation, Importance, used a paired comparison ranking method to establish a hierarchy of strategic priorities. The Performance dimension allowed each of the participants to “grade” how well the city is currently performing or succeeding in each of the seven focus areas on a 1 to 9 scale, with 9 being “practically perfect” and 1 being “not at all.” Then, having evaluated each of the seven strategic objectives on both Importance and Performance, it is possible to plot the results on a 2x2 matrix, as shown below:



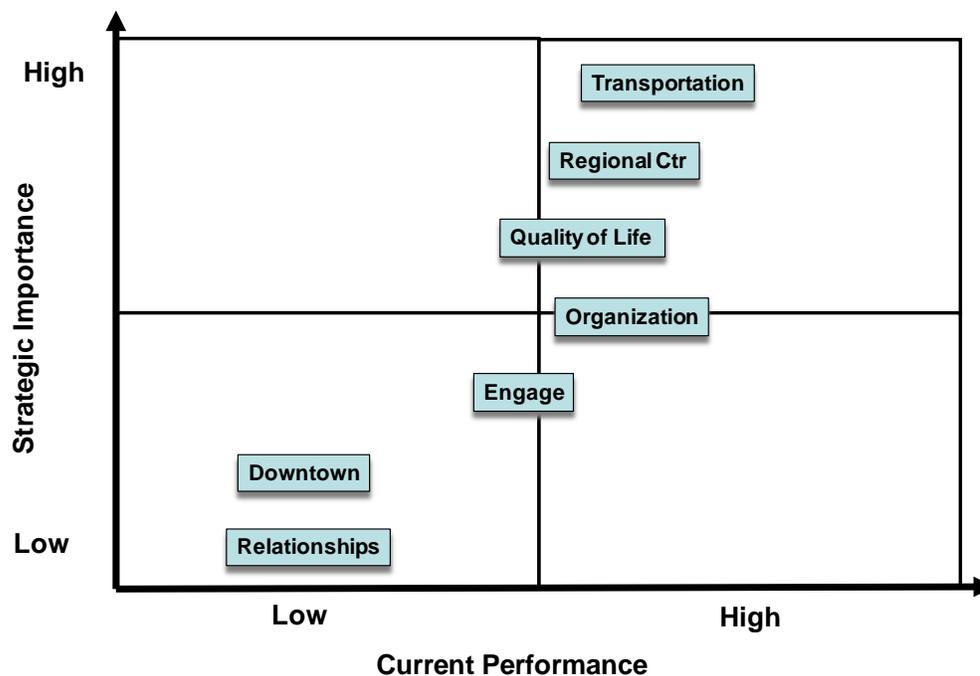
Definitions of the four quadrants of the strategy evaluation matrix are as follows:

- **"Givens"** are high value/high performance items. They constitute the city’s primary strategies and are indispensable for current success. If they are very high in strategic importance and near the center line of performance they require efforts at improvement, doing them better. Givens demand high levels of constant attention to assure the quality of the system.
- **"Foundational Strategies"** are vital support functions. They are necessary to the system and should be performed at least an acceptable level, near the right center.
- **"Immediate Opportunities"** indicate key areas for innovation that can have major and early impact on success. They show where not only "doing things differently"

but doing different things are imperative. Time lines are usually less than one year for implementation.

- **"Mid to Long-term Opportunities"** represent key success factors that would likely be brought on line following execution of the Immediate Opportunities. These *innovations* are usually 1-2 years or more out.

The consensus scatter plot of the seven Forney strategic objectives is shown below:



Based on the interpretation matrix, the following assignments of each of the seven strategies were made:

Givens - Primary Strategies

- Implement transportation improvements
- Become a regional center
- Enhance the quality of life

Foundational - Must Haves

- Develop the municipal organization

Immediate Opportunity – Plan and Invest Now

- None identified

Mid to Long Term Opportunity – Research and Plan

- Engage the community
- Revitalize and expand downtown
- Foster strategic relationships

It is interesting to note that none of the identified strategies were plotted in the “Immediate Opportunity” quadrant when, clearly, the City has a number of immediate to mid term opportunities to address. It is likely that that the ratings on the “performance” dimension on some of the immediate opportunities – such as the transportation and regional center strategies, reflect an optimism that steps are already underway to achieve those results,, even though the City is still in the very early days of their implementation. In terms of priority planning, in our opinion, these two strategic areas of focus, in particular, should be considered as areas of immediate opportunity, as opposed to primary strategies, and that the City’s leadership team should be thinking of them in terms of t innovation and investment to drive these strategies forward more rapidly.

ACTION STEPS

Having identified seven key strategic objectives or focus areas, the City Council then worked to identify specific projects or initiatives for each major strategy. Action items were developed and prioritized, using a “sticky dot” voting technique. Below are listed, by strategic objective, the Council’s consensus initiatives for the immediate, mid, and long term time periods. Those initiatives or projects shown in bold type represent the highest priority goals within each of the strategic focus areas.

IMPLEMENT TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Immediate (FY 2008-2009)

- **Open the Main Street extension**
- **Repair existing streets and roads**
- **Create a ride share website and promotional billboards**
- Start a sidewalk program
- Break ground for transportation project

Mid-Term (2-3 Years)

- Create van pool to a central point in Dallas
- Expand SH 1641 to four lanes to the city limits
- Acquire right-of-way for a future north loop
- Work on improving relationships with the railroad
- Continue to implement road and sidewalk plan
- Develop plan for Broad Street
- Implement drainage improvements to address flooding issues

Long-Term (Beyond 3 years)

- Widen SH 740 from Pinson to SH 460
- Expand FM548 from 1641 to 741
- Work with DART to secure a commuter rail station
- Improve and expand parking areas
- Expand Hwy 80 from Interstate 20 to Forney

BECOME A REGIONAL CENTER

Immediate (FY 2008-2009)

- **Sign an incentive package with the Endeavor development group**
- **Identify and target 10 prime companies we want to locate in Forney**
- **Assess transportation, location, linkage and synergies for regional development**
- Start the bridge over the railroad
- Define more precisely what we want "Regional Center" to mean
- Create a Meeting Plan
- Complete an entertainment / sports feasibility study

Mid-Term (2-3 Years)

- Attract professional jobs / major employer
- Attract bio-medical growth to development around the Med Center
- Develop and grow retail relationships
- Implement T.I.P. Strategies report and the Jacobs, Carter Burgess Comprehensive Plan
- Promote sports tournaments for new athletic facilities

Long-Term (Beyond 3 years)

- Specific long terms plans to be driven by the TIP Strategies Report and the Comprehensive Plan

ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE

Immediate (FY 2008-2009)

- **Create a Public Improvement District for Fox Hollow**
- **Explore community college partnerships**
- **Look at attracting retirement housing / assisted living development**
- Acquire and set aside "green" areas for future park development
- Explore Heritage Park
- Expand the usage of point systems and design regulations for residential projects
- Create a Forney Park District
- Improve code enforcement to beautify the City

- Continue to work with owners of plated property to rework their plats for more economically attractive development
- Promote community festivals
- Promote patriotic themes

Mid-Term (2-3 Years)

- Develop a recreation center / aquatics facility
- Continue to raise minimum housing standards
- Upgrade landscape / beautification of public spaces, including development of a tree planting program
- Finish Phase II of the Park
- Create a formal recreation program

Long-Term (Beyond 3 years)

- Acquire land and build the next sports park
- Secure Tree City USA designation
- Secure All American City designation

DEVELOP THE MUNICIPAL ORGANIZATION

Immediate (FY 2008-2009)

- **Hire an Events Planner / Public Information Officer**
- **Establish an Information Technology Department and hire an IT person**
- **Hire a City Attorney**
- **Create a Parks Department and do all programming for city parks**
- **Create s Forney Sports Authority**
- Provide enough personnel to perform the work required
- Set and implement policies and procedures
- Conduct a training and development needs assessment for municipal employees
- Develop a municipal facilities plan
- Hire a Fire Marshall
- Increase City Council training (TML/ICSC, etc.)

Mid-Term (2-3 Years)

- Expand City Hall / administrative space
- Find a new home for public works operations facility
- Begin implementation of the municipal facilities plan

Long-Term (Beyond 3 years)

- Continue implementation of the municipal facilities plan
- Hire a City Engineer

ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY

Immediate (FY 2008-2009)

- **Improve and expand the City's website**
- **Conduct a City Council meeting at Forney High School**
- **Develop a quarterly 75126 zip code newsletter**
- **Develop and hold a Board Appreciation dinner**
- Develop a citizen communication plan
- Advertise City Council meetings
- Conduct semi-annual town hall meetings
- Complete an annual citizens survey
- Create capital improvement project information / status boards
- Develop a visual depiction of our strategy, where we are and what we are working on

Mid-Term (2-3 Years)

- Secure a venue for the annual State of the City address

Long-Term (Beyond 3 years)

- Establish a cable television presence for the City

REVITALIZE AND EXPAND DOWNTOWN

Immediate (FY 2008-2009)

- **Determine what can be done now to make the old fire station look better**
- **Light downtown buildings**
- Develop a functioning Downtown Advisory Committee
- Determine the availability of new land for sale and start marketing it
- Secure a recommendation on Main Street Program from the Advisory Committee
- Refurbish historical downtown signage
- Build stronger relationships with downtown business owners
- Better define Downtown area limits
- Adopt an alternative code for historic buildings

Mid-Term (2-3 Years)

- Buy the First Baptist property for a future City Hall
- Become a Main Street City
- Explore / encourage mixed use development in the downtown area
- Have the old fire station restored
- Create a downtown theme / signage

Long-Term (Beyond 3 years)

- Have events on a regular basis to bring people downtown

FOSTER STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

Immediate (FY 2008-2009)

- **Explore the feasibility of hiring a lobbyist**
- **Go to Austin as a “City” not as a “County”**
- **Seek a Forney appointment to the Regional Transportation Council**
- Identify the “top people” in all areas in Austin, especially the key agencies impacting Forney
- Create a legislative positions report
- Canvas political contacts (contributors)
- Develop a political communication plan
- Continue to develop relationship with FISD Superintendent (City Manager)
- Maintain our current political relationships

- Create a group for regional transportation communication with Dallas, Mesquite, Sunnyvale
- Develop plan to make regular and impactful visits to legislators and state agencies

Mid-Term (2-3 Years)

- Support and strengthen the Forney Chamber of Commerce
- Increase NCTCOG presence
- Continue relationships with Kaufman County
- Develop Council member relationships with School Board members

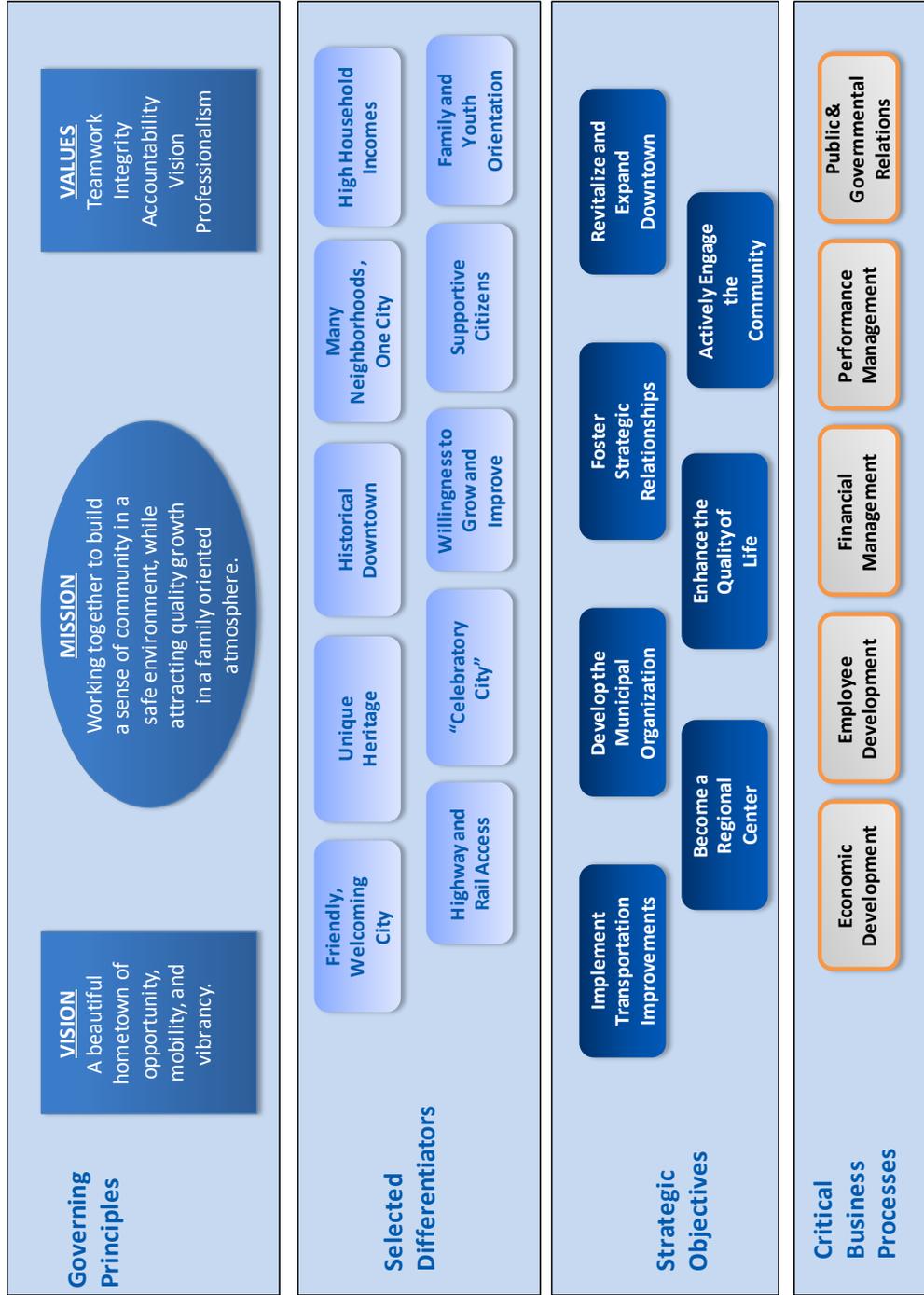
Long-Term (Beyond 3 years)

- None identified

STRATEGY ARTICULATION MAP

A strategy articulation map is simply a graphical depiction of an organizations strategy in terms of its mission, vision, values, market differentiators and strategic focus. It can and should be expanded to include the specific action steps required for achievement of strategic success and can be cascaded through the organization to facilitate the development of departmental and divisional work programs that “roll up” to the individual strategies depicted in the map. The strategy articulation map resulting from Forney’s strategic planning workshop is shown on the following page.

Strategy Articulation Map



RECOMMENDATIONS / NEXT STEPS

The City Council and staff made significant progress in charting a future direction for the City of Forney. However, it is important to remember that strategic planning is a *process*, not an individual project that can be marked off of the “to do” list. To realize the value of the strategic planning workshop, both the Council and the staff must be committed to following through and to making the developed plan into a central component of the city’s management process.

Specific recommended next steps are as follows:

1. The City Council should review and adopt this strategic planning report, making such modifications or clarifications as the Council deems appropriate.
2. The City Council should commit to institutionalizing the strategic planning effort, linked to the annual budget process, to allow for further clarification and refinement of their strategic intent and to make mid-course corrections as warranted and appropriate.
3. The specific short term action items should be evaluated and validated, both by staff members and Council, modified as necessary, and incorporated into the upcoming budget process, as appropriate, as policy guidance from the Council.
4. The adopted strategic plan should be presented to the operating departments of the City of Forney and direction should be given to link proposed budget requests and ongoing operating initiatives to one or more of the strategic focus area. Those activities that cannot be shown to directly support at least one of the focus areas should be critically evaluated for elimination or substantial reduction.
5. A strategy implementation and monitoring process should be developed. This would include the development of key performance measures for each strategic focus area, first at the enterprise level. Then, linking measures should be developed at each subordinate level, along with a business planning and reporting process, to ensure that meaningful progress towards strategic success is being achieved.